



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, NEIGHBORHOODS, AND STRATEGIC PLANNING DEPARTMENT

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: April 20, 2007

TO: Ray Giometti, Planning Commission Chair
Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Don Erickson, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: CPA #2007-M-07, Duvall Ave

DESCRIPTION:

The subject area is located immediately north of the NE Sunset Boulevard Corridor District and west of Duvall Avenue NE along the eastern edge of an existing 7.6-acre island of unincorporated King County. Initially, this CPA was proposed by a property owner whose property fronts on Duvall Avenue NE. However, the City Council agreed to make this a City-sponsored application and waived the application fee. The original applicant had requested that the existing Residential Single Family (RS) land use designation be changed to Commercial Corridor (CC) so that three properties fronting on Duvall Avenue NE and one interior property could have the same zoning as those across the street to the east (Exhibit 1). This 7.6-acre is part of an active annexation proposal.

BACKGROUND:

Existing uses are one-story single-family detached dwellings on 8,000 to 11,000 square foot lots. King County's Comprehensive Plan designates the subject area Urban Residential, Medium, 4 to 12 dwelling units per acre, and it is currently zoned R-4, four units per gross acre (Exhibit 2). With the transfer of development rights and bonuses, densities of up to six units per gross acre are allowed under the current County zoning. Renton's Comprehensive Plan designates the subject area Residential Single Family (Exhibit 3). The area has no steep slopes or other sensitive areas (Exhibit 4) and slight changes in topography (Exhibit 5). Because the site is located within a proposed annexation area, City staff recommended that this CPA be changed to a City initiated application and that the fee be waived. Council considered this on December 11, 2006, and agreed. As a City-sponsored CPA, staff determined that only the lots fronting on Duvall Avenue NE should be considered. An interior lot on SE 107th Place was dropped since it did not meet the minimum mapping criteria. The parcels included in the revised City proposal are shown on Exhibits 2 and 3. Portions of the parcel frontages are now being purchased by the City for right-of-way expansion of the Duvall Avenue arterial.

The properties across the street on the east side of Duvall Avenue NE between NE Sunset Boulevard and NE 17th Place have been designated Commercial Corridor, as have the properties to the south along both sides of NE Sunset Boulevard. These typically larger,

Commercial Arterial (CA) zoned parcels, are also located within the NE Sunset Boulevard Corridor Business District.

ISSUE SUMMARY:

1. Should the City redesignate single-family properties along the west side of Duvall Avenue NE between NE Sunset Boulevard and NE 17th Place to commercial?
2. If the Commission decides it is appropriate to change the existing RS designation to a commercial designation, which of the two potential designations, Commercial Neighborhood (CN) or Commercial Corridor (CC), would be most appropriate for this area?

ANALYSIS:

As shown on Exhibit 3, under Renton's Comprehensive Plan, the subject area is currently designated Residential Single Family (RS). Probable zoning, upon annexation, without a Comprehensive Plan amendment would be R-8, eight units per net acre. Across Duvall Avenue NE to the east (south of NE 18th Street, if extended) the area is currently designated Commercial Corridor (CC) and zoned Commercial Arterial (CA). Immediately south of the 7.6-acre unincorporated island, the properties fronting on NE Sunset Boulevard are also currently designated CC and zoned CA.

Duvall Avenue NE is designated as a "minor" arterial in the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. It appears that the proposed road widening this summer along Duvall Avenue NE, south of NE 17th Place, if extended, could impact and potentially lessen the livability of the existing four single-family residences fronting on this designated minor arterial. Changes include a proposed 10-foot street widening along both sides of Duvall Avenue NE that will narrow the residential frontages of the properties on the west side of the street. With current front yards varying in depth between two feet and 30-feet, widening and the anticipated increased traffic along this corridor would likely impact the five residential properties along the street south of NE 17th Place, if extended. Potential impacts include increased noise, pollution, nighttime glare, and a general loss of privacy.

Commercial, unlike residential, is not generally considered to be a 24-hour use. Impacts from increased vehicular traffic, such as noise and glare, tend to be less intrusive with commercial uses than they are with residential uses. If properly designed and scaled, commercial uses can also function as buffers between lower density residential areas and minor arterials, such as Duvall Avenue NE. Assuming that a commercial designation would be more appropriate than a residential designation for these five lots, it then becomes a question of which of the City's applicable commercial land use designations would be most appropriate. By reviewing existing land use policies, lot sizes, setback requirements, and the like, it should be possible to determine the more appropriate commercial designation.

Renton's Comprehensive Plan includes two potential commercial land use designations that are appropriate for consideration. These are:

- 1) Commercial Corridor: This land use designation is characterized by concentrated, pre-existing commercial activity, primarily in a linear urban form, that provides

necessary goods and services for daily living, accessible to nearby neighborhoods, serving a sub-regional market and accommodating large volumes of traffic. The implementing zone for this designation is Commercial Arterial.

- 2) **Commercial Neighborhood:** This land use designation provides for small scale, low-intensity commercial areas located within neighborhoods and is primarily for the convenience of residents who live nearby. The implementing zone for this designation is Commercial Neighborhood.

Table 1, below, includes relevant land use objectives and policies for both the Commercial Corridor and Commercial Neighborhood land use designations.

Table 1. Relevant Commercial Land Use Designation Objectives Policies

COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR	COMMERCIAL NEIGHBORHOOD
Objective LU-DDD: The Commercial Corridor land use designation should include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Established commercial and office areas; 2) Developments located on large parcels of land; 3) Projects that may be highly visible from principal arterials; 4) Uses dependent upon or benefiting from high-volume traffic; 5) Uses that provide significant employment; and 6) Businesses that provide necessary or desirable goods and services the larger community 	Objective LU-WWW: Commercial Neighborhood designated areas are intended to reduce traffic volumes, permit small-scale business uses, such as commercial/retail, professional office, and services that serve the personal needs of the immediate population in surrounding neighborhoods.
	Policy LU-422. The Commercial Neighborhood designation should be implemented by Commercial Neighborhood zoning.
Policy LU-333. The Commercial Corridor land use designation should be mapped in areas with the following characteristics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Located on, and having access to, streets classified as principle arterials; 2) High traffic volumes; or 3) Land use pattern characterized by strip commercial development, shopping centers, or office parks 	Policy LU-423. Commercial Neighborhood designated areas should be located: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Within one-quarter mile of existing and planned residential areas; 2) To the extent possible, outside of the trade areas of other small-scale commercial uses offering comparable goods and services; and 3) Contiguous to a street no smaller than those classified at the collector level.
Policy LU-335. Increased demand for commercial uses should be accommodated primarily through redevelopment and intensification of existing business area designations rather than expansion of those areas.	Policy LU-424. Commercial Neighborhood designated areas should not increase in scale or size to the point of changing the character of the nearby residential neighborhood.
Policy LU-348. Encourage consolidation of	Policy LU-426. A mix of uses (e.g.

individual parcels to maximize flexibility of site design and reduce access points.	convenience retail, consumer services, office, residential) should be encouraged in small-scale commercial developments within Commercial Neighborhood designated areas.
Policy LU-349. Support development plans incorporating the following features: 1) Shared access points and fewer curb cuts; 2) Internal circulation among adjacent parcels; 3) Shared parking facilities; 4) Allowance for future transition to structured parking facilities; 5) Centralized signage; 6) Unified development concepts; and 7) Landscaping and streetscape that softens visual impacts.	Policy LU-430. Commercial structures in Commercial Neighborhood designated areas should be compatible with nearby residential areas in height, front yard setbacks, lot coverage, building design, and use.

Table 2, below, compares the different development criteria and types of uses allowed in the implementing zones of both the Commercial Corridor and the Commercial Neighborhood land use designations. Where existing development patterns are established in an area, a review of potential future zoning can also be informative.

Table 2. Commercial Land Use Designation Implementing Zones

	Commercial Arterial	Commercial Neighborhood
Minimum Lot Size	None	5,000 sq. ft.
Maximum Lot Coverage	65% unless in bldg. or garage	65% unless in bldg. or garage
Minimum/Maximum Residential Density	None/20 dwelling units per net acre	None/4 dwelling units per net acre
Minimum/Maximum Front Yard	10 feet	10ft/15ft
Minimum Rear Yard	None, unless abutting or adjacent to a residential zone, then 15 feet	None, unless abutting or adjacent to a residential zone, then 15 feet
Minimum Side Yard	None, unless abutting or adjacent to a residential zone, then 15 feet	None, unless abutting or adjacent to a residential zone, then 15 feet
Vehicular-Oriented Uses Allowed	Gas stations, Vehicle service and repair, Car washes, Restaurants, Professional Office Buildings	Small restaurants, Small offices

Based upon the above, it would initially appear that there is little difference between the implementing zones for these two land use designations in terms of minimum lot size and required set backs. Although there is no minimum lot size specified for the CA zone, the scale and vehicular-orientation of uses within it typically dictate larger lot sizes than those under consideration along the west side of Duvall Avenue NE. Typically, CA zoned lots are 20,000 square feet or larger in size and 35,000 square feet is not uncommon for most drive-in type of businesses such as quick-stop markets and service stations. By comparison, the existing residential parcels fronting on Duvall Avenue NE are 9,000 to 11,000 square feet in size and between 104 feet and 110 feet in depth. Future street widening will reduce these to an average depth of around 97 feet. These much smaller sized lots would not lend themselves to the larger, more vehicular-oriented uses such as car washes, gas stations, vehicle repair, and fast food establishments allowed in the CA zone under the CC land use designation. These smaller lots appear more suitable for those smaller scaled, less vehicular-oriented convenience and service type uses found in the CN zone and encouraged in CN designation land use policies.

The properties to the east, across Duvall Avenue NE currently designated Commercial Corridor on the City's Comprehensive Plan, average 157-feet wide and 230-feet deep. In terms of size, these parcels average 36,000 square feet or larger in size. This is equivalent to an aggregation of nearly four of these existing residential zoned, 9,000 to 11,000 square foot lots fronting on Duvall Avenue NE. Lots with these dimensions along the west side of Duvall Avenue NE, in the area under consideration, could only be created by assembling three or four of the existing single-family lots found here and would have to be at least two parcels deep. Given the quality of the homes in the area and multiple ownership patterns found there, it does not seem likely that these would be consolidated into larger single parcels under the same ownership in the near future.

In considering a land use redesignation for the parcels fronting on Duvall Avenue NE, it also is important to look at them in the context of the surrounding area. The residential uses that would remain to the west are all single-family detached dwellings fronting on what appear to be private access roads. SE 107th Place lacks typical urban street improvements such as curbs, gutters, and sidewalks. Also, this unincorporated area remains on septic as do the lots fronting on Duvall Avenue NE. Because of the lack of sewers, major new development will not occur until sewer service is provided within the area.